



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/560,076	01/26/2006	Ralf Wiedemann	102792-507(11270P4 US)	1082
27389 7590 08/28/2009 NORRIS, MCLAUGHLIN & MARCUS 875 THIRD AVE 18TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10022				
EXAMINER HECKERT, JASON MARK				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1792				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
08/28/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/560,076

Applicant(s)

WIEDEMANN ET AL.

Examiner

JASON HECKERT

Art Unit

1792

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 39 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/55/08)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Newly submitted claim 39 directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: Claim 39 presents a method of operation, whereas originally examined claims were drawn to an apparatus. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the dispensing device can be used to dispense agents in devices other than automatic washing machines.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claim 39 is withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Response to Arguments

2. Due to the applicant's amendments to the claims, the previous rejections are rendered moot.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 3-13, 32-38 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bellati. Bellati discloses an automatic detergent dispensing device comprising a body 4 that has a pair of apertures 9 readable on an inlet and outlet located at a lower end of the body. Temperature sensitive actuation means open and close apertures 9 allowing water to contact a detergent tablet. The actuation means comprise a bimetallic strip element 30. The bimetal element moves a blocking device, readable on a plug, from a position where at least one of the apertures is closed, to a position where at least one of the apertures is open. Bellati discloses that the element snaps in a temperature range of 35 to 60 degrees Celsius (col. 9 lines 15-25). Bellati discloses that the device returns to its normal shape at a temperature in the vicinity of ambient temperature. Room temperature is generally around 20 – 30 degrees Celsius. Thus, Bellati is believed to anticipate a lower snap temperature in the range claimed in claim 8. At least one part of the bimetal element is attached with body 4, and the other part of the detent mechanism biases with the closing element 2 (col. 9 lines 5-45). The bimetal element is in the form of a pre-existing three dimensional shape. The bimetal element interacts with the plug element and moves the plug with respect to the body during the temperature change. The bimetal strip element is clamped to the rear of the body, which can be considered a plate. The body is water resistant. The body also comprises a channel in communication with the inlet. A detergent tablet is disposed within the channel. The body has a substantially uniform bore (see figures) that is readable on a tube. The device can be used with compositions other than detergent, such as those in claim 38.

5. Claim 2 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rodd. In one embodiment, Rodd et al. discloses a portable bulk detergent dispenser containing a detergent container 19, an outlet 28 located at a first end of the body, and a thermally responsive closure means (bimetal or wax) 23 with a piston or ram 25 (see figures 7 and 8) that closes valve 21 which is located at a second end of the body.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1, 20-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rodd et al. in view of Bellati. In one embodiment, Rodd et al. discloses a portable bulk detergent dispenser containing a detergent container 19, an outlet 28, a dosing area 20 readable on an auxiliary chamber, and a thermally responsive closure means (bimetal or wax) 23 with a piston or ram 25 (see figures 7 and 8). The wax swells upon contact with water present in the machine. The dosing area operates in synchronization with the closure means. A linkage 21 is disposed between the auxiliary closure and main body closure. Rodd also teaches other embodiments responsive to other water conditions, such as pressure. Liquid or solid detergents can be used. Rodd discloses various means to control the amount of fluid that enters the auxiliary chamber, which is also readable on a collecting funnel. The auxiliary chamber has a drain. Rodd does not teach an opening for the inlet of wash liquor. Bellati teaches inlet apertures 9 for

receiving wash water. Such inlet also reads on a second linkage. It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Rodd and include an inlet, as this requires only routine skill and is obviated by the teachings of Bellati.

8. Claims 14-15 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bellati in view of Fahnoe. Bellati discloses functionally equivalent mounting means that keep the snap element in place, but does not teach a rod and flange. Fahnoe teaches arm 13 and pivot 12 read on the plate and rod respectively. The rod 12 clearly has a terminal end that bonds to the snap elements like a flange (figures 2 and 3). Thus, mounting means for a bimetal element, such as that claimed in claims 14-15, were known at the time of invention as functionally equivalent mounting devices for bimetals in dispensing devices. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention, to use a plate and rod, as disclosed by Fahnoe, in order to fasten a bimetal element.

9. Claims 16-19 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bellati in view of Hattori. Bellati teaches the use of a bimetal snap element to control fluid flow in the detergent dispenser of a washing machine. He does not teach the use of two bimetal elements. Bimetal valves are common in the art of fluid flow, and are known to include two bimetal elements that interact. Hattori shows a bimetal valve with first and second bimetal discs (see claims 6, 33, and 39) that interact. Thus, such an arrangement was known at the time of invention, which allows response to multiple temperatures. Claims 18-19 regard properties of the metal that can be altered through routine experimentation. The temperature is considered to be a cause effective variable.

It is well settled that determination of optimum values of cause effective variables such as these process parameters is within the skill of one practicing the art. *In re Boesch*, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of invention to use two bimetal elements, as taught by Hattori, for response to multiple temperature levels.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JASON HECKERT whose telephone number is (571)272-2702. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Friday, 9:00 - 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Barr can be reached on (571)272-1414. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael Barr/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 1792

JMH